that invasion took place which we had seen in preparation in the village of Chaguaral. Unfortunately moths got into it and ruined it, and I had no other recourse but to throw it out since it was no longer worth sending to Italy together with some skulls and other objects I had collected. 727

This custom of scalp taking is common to all the Indians hereabouts, and is also indulged in by those living in North America. The strange thing is that it was also practiced by the Scythians.

The Germans also were in the habit of drinking from the skulls of their fallen enemies. Who does not know about Albuin the Longobard who made his wife Rosamund drink from her father's skull some 1300 years ago? [171]

This Indian practice reminds me of something which, in my opinion, reflects the sagacity of these savages:

I was with the colonel of the regiment which was on duty on the frontier, on one of his periodic visits. Near a fort where an Indian tribe was camped the son of the general chief came to see him, (the chief himself did not make an appearance since he wished the colonel to call on him first) and made us a present of some very good and delicious aloja. As it happened that he had just returned from a raid upon the Tobas we asked him if he had not brought back a few scalps. The Indian, as though seeking an excuse for his cruelty said: "The Tobas take the scalps of white men and we take the scalps of the Tobas."

On this same occasion, seeing me dressed in the manner of country people, surrounded by army officers and standing beside the colonel who treated me with great consideration and respect, the Indians whispered among themselves: "Who do you suppose this one is?" And the more sophisticated answered "he must be some president or other!"

It seemed to me as I heard this idle chatter and banter that I was in the midst of a thickly crowded mass of our own lower classes.

[196] One of the superstitions among these Indians is to sally forth on their raiding expeditions with the new moon. They appear to attribute some magical virtue to it, yet they do not 721 821

customarily travel by night for fear of snakes and tigers [jaguars--Translator].

We are already aware of the fact that their weapons are bow and arrows, lances and clubs, all made of wood. They do not employ metal of any sort because they do not possess any and because they neither know how nor are able to work it. If they can get hold of a nail or a knife or an old tin pot they hold it in high esteem and value it greatly. They also use boleadoras ["bolas"--Translator].

They travel hundred of leagues in order to wage war, and do so on foot and in a relatively short time for the Indians are amazing walkers. Naked and therefore light they travel with agility yet without seeming to. They go barefoot and therefore need to lift their feet less off the ground.

The chiefs never fail to exhort their warriors before the battle, and just prior to the attack their captain shouts at them: "Comrades! Here we are now. Fight with courage and do not flee even when the enemy stamps on your feet." A hortative which seems to me well suited to its purpose and quite to the point since it concerns those who will be involved in hand-to-hand combat. They mangle the bodies of their fallen enemies without any pity whatsoever, and in addition to taking scalps, they tear out their hearts, mutilate their members and submit them to a thousand other cruelties.

I do not know whether they dismember their prisoners before killing them or are content to cut their throats, as they would a sheep's, before tearing them to pieces. This is what they did to our interpreter Faustino: first they shot him with arrows by surprise, thus knocking him to the ground where he lay helpless. Right away they sprang upon him and slit his throat while he was yet alive and conscious. Then they cut his head off, tied him to a tree by his feet and stripped him of all he had on.

Here is a dialogue between two Indians after a battle:

First Indian -- "Now I shall tell you what happened on the return journey. I suddenly heard someone in the rear shout 'The enemy is killing our comrades down there in that dip in the road.' I immediately shouted to my followers -- 'Get into battle order,

consideration in proportion to what was his while he was alive and amongst his neighbors of his own village. This belief causes them to show great reverence for those of their number who have died. 775

Despite the a'hóts' inclination for wandering about, they yet ever remain in the vicinity of the place where the bodies to which they belonged died.

The soul of a person who dies in a foreign place and who has not been given burial in his home territory, is condemned to wander alone, despised and sad in the midst of the souls of strangers.

I asked my guide why it was that fortune was so cruel with those wretches who, through no fault of their own, died and left their bodies far from their native place; to which he answered: "The mere fact of these bodies having been left abandoned in a far off place by their companions and by the sons of the same tribe, was a sign that while they were alive they had not enjoyed the love and esteem of the others. The foreign a'hóts on seeing the soul of an outsider make an appearance amongst them reason in this way: 'if the person to whom this soul belonged was not honored by his companions or by the sons of his own tribe, nor given burial befitting a brother, then he was neither loved nor esteemed by his own people.' This being so, then they also shun him and leave him alone." I only repeat the rascal's words. 766

This reminds me of the veneration which the peoples of all nations accord to their burial grounds, and, in this matter of the souls of the unburied being condemned to wander, these Indians have the same beliefs as the ancient Romans according to what Virgil so beautifully expresses in the Aenead.

These beliefs are the basis of the ceremonies to cure the sick and to bury the dead.

But before entering upon their description I must call attention to a sort of star cult, especially amongst the women. These heavenly bodies are the moon and the morning star. 821 ● 795

When the moon rises the women leave their huts and, holding hands, form a circle and begin to wheel rapidly, jumping and shouting in honor of the silvery moon.

They do the same thing when the morning star appears on the eastern horizon, and pray to it that the algarrobo pod crop and other wild fruits may be abundant.

Ma 795 821

At midnight also they sometimes break their sleep and men [200] and women together form into a circle and jump and shout in order to win the favor of heaven.

During lunar and solar eclipses they gather together to implore the cessation of the inexplicable phenomenon. Here, however, they have dealings with an a'hŏt whom they summon and fear.

These are the only acts of worship of which I have knowledge, and they show the inclination of these savages toward sabianism or the religion of stars; yet the sun does not play a part amongst the objects of their worship or of their summoning. According to Faustino the interpreter, they only get together to conjure up the sun's reappearance when it has been hidden behind clouds for a long time (an extremely rare occurrence in that region) or if a storm is coming up -- and even then it is not the sun but the a'hŏt itself which they conjure because they are being deprived of the light and warmth of the beneficial star.

One can therefore perceive that among these Indians also it is the women who start the worship process and who, as was the case amongst the ancient pagan nations, have found in the pale moon the element most suited to their condition and therefore more able and better disposed to protect them. The sun, on the other hand, so dissimilar from the temperament of womankind, seems to await the worship of men, but they are not so prone to be influenced by fears, hopes and prayers as are the women.

I have not seen idols in any of the places to which my curiosity has guided me to search for them, and my guides have always denied their existence. The Indians' outlook however does not seem to be one which would find the acceptance of idols difficult. In addition to that semi-worship of the heavenly bodies which has been alluded to it is probable that every object in nature having particular characteristics, be they terrifying or beneficial or mysterious, calls forth some response from the Indian which may be close to adoration. MA 778

Mr. Braly, an engineer who has traveled in that part of the Chaco in the vicinity of the Salado River, assures me that the Mocoví Indians of those parts will not leave the place where the Aerolite is to be found which fell in the last century with A terrible noise and blinding flash of light. Mo 778

and at the very same time were dancing precisely the same dance underground immediately beneath them. The object of making so much noise was to intercept all communication with the sickness a'hots who were in the two men. The best doctor is the one who most jumps, howls and beats the earth with his feet. 755

The public who surrounded these goings on was there to give importance and greater virtue to the treatment, but the suspicion was in the air that the a'hot, on leaving the body of the possessed might take it into its mind to enter one of the other persons present.

This scene convinces me that: among the Indians, doctors earn their bread by the sweat of their... whole bodies; that among them also deceivers, by dint of much deceiving, finally [212] deceive themselves; and that the rabble was really convinced of the efficacy of the exorcisms.

And I was about to smile, moved by scorn and pity, but I remembered that c'etait tout comme chez nous [it was all much the same as it is with us--Translator] and... the smile died before it was born.

Chapter XII

Social Matters

These Indians do not differentiate the seasons of the year as we do, but rather by the several harvests: thus they speak of the season of algarrobo pod harvest, etc. 805

How could they even begin to divide the year into months or moons if they only count up to four? This very fact guarantees us a priori that they have not busied themselves with establishing the laws of the earth's or sun's movements. [802]

In spite of this it is remarkable that they divide the day up into innumerable portions according to the position of the sun, which takes the place of our hours. They also differentiate between various constellations such as the Pleiades, Venus, the Milky Way, and Centaur. [821]

And yet they do not have a word meaning "year." The Matacos use one, c-lúppe, which means period, and which has the same indeterminate meaning which that word has with us. Instead of "day," they say "sun" (i-qûa-la), and in place of "month,"

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What further attracts my attention is the following: Instead of our "night" they use a word which means "earth," that is, hunát hunná, just as for "day" they make use of their word for "sun," as if they had intended to oppose one to the other. It may not be too farfetched to see in this a sort of philosophy in which the earth and the sun represent two opposite principles: darkness and light, good and evil. I, however, have not been able to perceive any such philosophy in their ideology, although it is true that something of this sort -- somewhat materialized -- is to be found in their religion, as we have had occasion to see in an earlier section of this treatise.

And is this business of using the sun, or light, to express the idea of time not an intellectual parallel or approach to the Aryan, for from the Sanscrit dyu, that is "light" [Spanish luz--Translator] came the Latin dies, the Spanish día, and the Italian di, all of which mean "day" or "day's effort."

Meanwhile, in order to say "this afternoon" they say hunná and quiá-hunná, and for "last night," hunná-tzi-nná, keeping thus to the same form and sequence followed in the order of words which we saw in "today," "tomorrow," etc.

Furthermore, their expression for "sky" is ppe-lé, which must 192 be translated as "that which is above," from ppé, "above" and lé 821 which is a contraction of lél-lé or c-lel-lé, a patronimic word which is used to express the concept of origin, provenience, fatherland, etc.

It is said that savages have no abstract ideas, but I ask, is the 192 idea of "always" or "never" abstract or not? Without waiting for an 196 answer I say that these Indians in question have the word inne-mid which expresses "never," and c-lam-mej for "always," which they derive, respectively, from innem -- "more" (Italian mai, Latin umquam) and the negative d; and from j-lam, meaning "same" plus the postposition ej.

It may be objected these are expressions made up of words which separately mean something more limited, which is valid as far as the objection goes. The French, let it be remembered [267] say toujours, "all the days," with the meaning of "always" and thus express an idea which is indefinite, or rather infinite, by means of a word which of itself has a limited meaning as is the case with "day." The fact of the matter is that a given abstraction is not

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco SI7

855 861 member of his own tribe. In the training of the Indian children the power of example and the natural desire to imitate has the most effect. It is interesting to note how the young boys constantly watch the occupations of the elder men and how easily in this way they acquire the necessary 868 skill in the same occupations, above all in fishing and hunting. When the Toba boy is about six or seven years old, his father makes him a small bow and arrows with which he frequently practises shooting, thus at an early age acquiring dexterity in managing the weapon. Similarly the girls follow their mothers everywhere, down to the river, to the fields, and the forest, keenly watching how she does her work and soon learning to do the same.

881 As far as I know, no particular ceremonies are performed among the Choroti and Mataco with young boys at the attainment of puberty, nor do the present day Tobas in Bolivia practise any ceremonies of this kind. According to some ancient writers, the Tobas of the 18th century practised certain ceremonies with young boys, consisting of a peculiar arrangement of their hair and in pricking them on the body with sharp-pointed bones, but since the particular purpose of these ceremonies was to initiate them into the profession of a warrior, I shall reserve the details till later on, in treating of Indian warfare.

On the other hand, when a young girl has her first menstruation and becomes marriageable, the incident is celebrated among all Chaco tribes with certain feasts, dances, beer-drinking, and purely religious rites. In order fully to understand these ceremonies it is necessary to know the ideas which the Indians entertain about the mysterious phenomena of puberty. It is by no means sufficient to say that the puberty ceremonies simply serve to initiate the girl into her coming sexual life; their significance is much deeper.

881 941 [821] The physiological process which causes the menstruation of the women, incomprehensible as it seems to the Indian, strikes him as something extremely mysterious and must needs give rise to certain superstitious beliefs. Thus both the Tobas and the other Chaco tribes seem to have the idea that this strange phenomenon is caused, or at any rate influenced, by the new moon. Moreover, since the menstrual periods, and especially the first menses, are as a rule connected with certain nervous disorders and other alterations in the physical condition of the woman, it is naturally thought that during these critical days she is seriously exposed to the influence of evil spirits. At the same time, of course, owing to the awakening sexual desire, the relationship between this physiological

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The second class of spirits are called *nahút*. They are the most feared because they are believed to cause death, the phenomenon most feared by primitive man. Being particularly death demons, the *nahút* are frequently called *nahút yil*. *Yil* is the Mataco word for death. Every death is due to a special *nahút yil*, and of course every mortal disease, or every disease which naturally ends in death unless the art of the medicine-man can prevent it. If one asks a Mataco Indian what a *nahút* is like, he will answer that it is a thin, shadow-like human figure; it is the double of the dead man. The *nahút* live in the earth, where the dead are interred, but they frequently leave this dwelling-place and fly through the air, approach the habitations of the living and inflict mortal disease upon them.

Every grave disease is due to a special *nahút*. Thus for instance, the intermittent fever which attacks people during the cold season, is caused by a *nahút telâh*. The Mataco, however, are of opinion that it is possible for a medicine-man to cure the patient by incantations in four or five days. The worst *nahút* of all is the small-pox, *otoahtyá*, a disease which has caused terrible ravages among the Mataco at different periods. The art of the medicine-man is powerless against this dreadful demon. Therefore, when an epidemic of small-pox breaks out in a Mataco village the inhabitants know of no other remedy against the evil than to burn the whole village, to abandon the place and the sick ones, and to depart to another place. When an Indian is attacked by the small-pox, the Mataco told me, the *nahút* seizes the patient at the throat and presses it together with such violence that the tongue hangs out from the mouth, the eyes are thrust out from their orbits, the face swells up, and the patient dies.

If in a village, during a certain time, several deaths have occurred, especially if an epidemic has been raging, the Mataco are in the habit of saying: »That place has been visited by many *nahút yil*». On the other hand, if in a certain village there has been no death and no disease for a long time, the Indians say: »In this place there are, at present, no *nahút yil*». There is practically no disease and no illness which is not directly or indirectly ascribed by the Indians either to an *aittáh slamsa* or a *nahút yil*. Slight disorders and illnesses which are cured in a couple of days are ascribed to the *aittáh*, mortal diseases to the *nahút*. If a Mataco for instance breaks his leg, or if some other misfortune happens to him which does not end fatally, he is of opinion that he has been attacked by a »small» *aittáh*. Similarly, there are *aittáh* operating in stupendous natural phenomena, in hurricanes, in torrential rains, in thunder and lightning,

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Toba SI12

M 776 in drought, in eclipses, etc. Thunder and lightning, for instance, are caused by the demons called *aitták tavakái pählai* (the »thunder demons»), which ●821 pass in great numbers through the air or above the clouds. Eclipses of the moon, on the other hand, are attributed to a demon called *aitták hayáh* which is supposed to prey upon the moon. The Mataco try to frighten away both the thunder-demons and the demon eclipsing the moon by shouting loudly and making a noise, and by beating drums.

M 775 774 The same may be said of the nature of the *aitták* and the *nahút* as has been said of the *möhsek* of the Choroti. It seems to me probable that they are in their origin nothing but spirits of the dead or disembodied human souls. From this point of view, I believe, Pelleschi is right when he says that the religion of the Mataco can be characterized as essentially a worship of souls. But there are disembodied souls of different kinds. The Mataco word for »soul» is *kasitah*. It is the soul that detaches itself from the body, temporarily during dreams, permanently in death. As a death-spirit the *kasitah* is generally the object of fear. Of these death-spirits some, which are particularly evil-minded, become *nahút* or personifications of mortal diseases, whereas others have become personifications of curable illnesses and lesser evils. It is a well known fact that the spirits of certain persons — especially of sorcerers and persons who have died a violent death — are greatly feared, and just such spirits are likely to M turn into that particular kind of demon whom the Mataco call *nahút*. The [764] fact that graves are regarded as the dwelling-places of these demons confirms the conclusion that the *nahút* are in their nature nothing but disembodied human souls.

T 776 As to the *T o b a s*, I have already mentioned that they call the spirits *peyák*. Like the Mataco, the Tobas fancy that these spirits appear in the shape of small boys (*nätolik*), and in daily life, when speaking of these beings, they more often use the word *nätolik* than the word *peyák*. Although the spirits in the main have human form, they at the same time resemble birds, and more particularly ostriches. At any rate the Tobas informed me that »the *peyák* have wings, large like those of the ostrich» — an idea quite natural to a people who even identify living men with ostriches. Still they are mostly invisible to the human eye; only the medicine-men who are endowed with a special clear-sightedness can see them and enter into communication with them. The whole world swarms with these mysterious beings, who are regarded as the causes of all evils that befall man. Everything that has been stated on this

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Toba SI/2
Choroti SK6

We have already seen that the most appreciated of these drinks is algaroba beer, which by the Mataco and the Choroti is called *atăs*, by the Tobas again *maplyí*. The tree itself and its fruit is called *oáh* in the Mataco and the Choroti language, in the Toba language *map*. The sacred beer is prepared with the utmost care and with certain religious or magical ceremonies. At this preparation there appears a strict division of labour between men and women. Although the women are not allowed to drink of the beer, they seemingly perform the larger part of the work. They collect the fruit in the forest, carrying it home in their large caraguatá bags, and afterwards mash it in mortars. Some old women start to chew the fruit, mixing it well with saliva, whereupon they spit it out into a goat's hide, fixed in the ground by means of sticks in such a way that it forms a sort of vessel. The goat's hide is used by the Choroti and by the Argentine Mataco, whereas the Tobas and the Bolivian Mataco use a wooden trough for the purpose. Lastly, hot water is poured over the mashed fruit.

These preparations require nearly a whole day. The most essential thing still remains, namely the fermentation, and to effect this is a duty solely incumbent on the men, since women as a rule do not take part in conjurations. The fermentation is sacred, because it means the birth of the good spirit. Now this happens in the night, but night is the time when evil spirits move about. According to the belief of the Indians, the invisible persecutors appear in great numbers in order to prevent the birth of the good spirit and interfere with the drink so that it cannot ferment and is entirely spoiled. Therefore special precautions must be taken for the critical time. The brewing of the algaroba beer for the great festivals during the algaroba season is — especially among the primitive Choroti — a matter that concerns the whole community. Hence, at the approach of night, the men arrive from all houses with their rattle gourds, sit round the hide or trough, and begin to chant a noisy, monotonous song without words, shaking the rattles in the rhythm of their chant. This ceremony is called by the Choroti *nissammaha oáh*, by the Tobas *niapiláh map*, and its most conspicuous object is to prevent the spirits from spoiling the beer. Since the new moon is believed to promote fermentation, a moonlight night is preferably chosen for the ceremony. The chant is typical of the Indian conjurations in the Chaco. It is always begun in a loud voice; then the voice gradually dies down, so that the last tones are only heard as a low and distant muttering. Thereupon they start again from the beginning, and so forth. In addi-

X 539 to get water they had to follow ropes to the river. There
X 773 were heavy storms and hail stones hurled through the roofs and the wind blew huts away. Many people died.

7. The Sun (Pedro)

X 539 The sun is a big medicine-man. When he is angry the
X 773 world turns to darkness. The sun has two huts one of which
821 he leaves in the morning. The other is situated on the side where he goes to sleep. Out of this hut a staircase of five hundred steps leads down under the ground. The sun always goes back to his starting point by an underground passage.

During the summer the days are long because the sun is an old man who walks slowly and with difficulty. It takes him a long time to make his trip. In the winter the sun is a boy who can run quickly. That is why the days are short.

When the sun makes his fire with *palo santo* wood it gets very hot on the earth. The sun is not, but he has a big fire and it is the heat from this fire which we feel on earth. In summer it is hot and the sun scorches the algarroba. When the algarroba is quite dry the sun unleashes a storm in order that the fruit may fall, then it becomes hot again for another harvest. The two harvests of the sun correspond to those of men. (Another explanation of heat is that somewhere very far away there is a big ship, like those on the Bermejo, and it is the smoke of these ships that is the heat.)

8. The Moon (Pedro)

The full moon is old, worn out and tired. Like old people, he walks slowly. When he gets very old he dies, then comes a storm. Afterwards he is born again. All men are the children of the moon. Before he dies he sends them a reminder.
[841] That is why women menstruate when the moon dies.

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The moon is a great thief. He always steals something, cows in particular. Once the men got angry and wanted to kill him. The sun said, »I don't wish you to kill my friend but if you do I will go away.» The men were afraid and they let the moon eat the cows.

The moon had sexual intercourse with a woman. That is why women menstruate. From the intercourse of the moon with that woman a boy and girl were born. They were the first people.

If a woman dreams about an old man she will find that she is menstruating when she wakens. Her soul has had intercourse with the moon who is very old and looks like an old man. Each month when a woman is about to menstruate, she dreams about that old man.

9. Sun and Moon (Pedro)

The sun and the moon are friends. The sun helps and protects the moon. If anybody wants to kill the moon, the sun says, »He is my friend, I will kill you.» The sun went off to catch lice. He found white lice and gave some of them to the moon. The moon was not satisfied with these lice and said. »I am an expert in catching lice.» He went off, but he did'nt return. The sun said, »What is the matter with the moon?» He went to look for him. He found the moon very ill. One of the lice the moon had caught had bored a big hole in his head. The sun brought a comb, dressed his hair and the moon was well again. (VIII, p. 97).[1]

10. Why the Moon is Yellow (Pedro)

The sun wanted spears. He dived into a river and changed himself into a big yellow fish (*atsa*).[2] When the Indians saw this fish they tried to kill him with spears. The back of the

[1] Roman figures refer to the notes beginning on on p. 90.

[2] A *dorado* fish.

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fish was full of spears but he could not be killed. The fish swam off with the spears in his body and distributed them among his people. The moon was not satisfied with the spears he received and he said, »I also can find spears. I am an expert in finding spears.» So the moon went to a river and changed himself into a fish. Men came and drove more than thirty spears into his body. The moon died. The men hauled him ashore, cut him into pieces and ate him. The sun said to himself, »What has happened to the moon?» He went to look for the moon and arrived in the village of the people who were eating the moon. As he watched them eating the moon, he changed himself into a dog and picked up all these bones. Unsuccessfully he tried to reform the moon but there were pieces missing, so he went back again and found the heart. One piece was still missing, it was the gallbladder. He found it at last and that is why the moon is yellow.

11. The Spots on the Moon (Pedro)

The sun wanted some ducks. He made a big net and changed himself into a duck. In this disguise he went to a lagoon where there were many ducks. He swam among the ducks and from time to time he dived under the water drawing a bird down with his net. He killed each one without being noticed by the others. He went back with many ducks which he distributed among the people of his village. He sent an old one to his friend the moon. The moon was not satisfied with this present and decided to go hunting for himself. Like the sun he made a big net and changed himself into a duck. But the ducks in the meantime had become distrustful and wanted to know who the mysterious enemy was who was bothering them. They defecated and obliged the moon to do the same. The odor of the moon's excrement is very offensive and quite different from that of the ducks. The birds recognized the moon and gathered to attack him. They scratched his body with their nails and

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claws and lacerated him in such a way that they almost pulled out his bowels. Hence on the moon's stomach one can see blue scars left by the claws of the ducks.

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12. The Constellations (Pedro)

In the sky there are two stars which are very near each other. They are called *tseʔyés* and they are said to be brothers. These brothers have a hunting dog which followed a flock of ostriches. Hearing the noise of the hunt one of the brothers went to look for the dog but could not find him. »Where is my dog?», he asked himself. »I did hear him.» The ostriches went up into the sky and the dog followed them. An ostrich feather, dyed red, fell down showing the brother where his dog was. The brother did not know what to do. The other brother came and said, »Let us go up there to get our dog, I am very fond of him.» He took his brother on his shoulders and they both ascended. First they went westward and there they were very near the dog but they did not see him as he had gone eastward following the ostriches. When they went toward the east, the dog crossed over to the south. The brothers went south at about 3 o'clock in the morning. In the summer time the brothers go out very late, but in the winter they may be seen at 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

A man built a corral which became a group of stars that appear by night.

Near the Ostrich (the Constellation of the Ostriches or the Pleiades) there is a leg in the sky. The Pleiades *patseLai* are the people who formerly inhabited the earth and who now live in the heavens. They warm themselves round a log which is constantly burning in the sky. The fire runs lengthwise along the log and never goes out. If any one should touch that log it would explode. It is of *palo santo* wood and therefore burns very slowly. The ashes fall on the ground and constitute frost.

Venus is the father of all the stars.

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13. Origin of the Southern Cross and the Pleiades (Martin)

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The jaguar's daughter married the deer. She had two sons by him. One night the mother jaguar killed the deer and brought back a piece of him to her daughter. The daughter recognized her husband. The two sons of the deer broke away from the sons of the jaguar, they started to fight. The sons of the deer in revenge killed the children of the jaguar and took the meat to their grandfather to eat. Then they ran away and shouted, »Our grandfather is eating the flesh of his own children.» The jaguar jumped up to catch them, but the young ones were prepared for him. They had collected a heap of arrows. They shot an arrow into the sky It remained fast. Then they shot another one which stuck to the butt of the first and so on until a ladder had been formed which reached down to the earth. When the jaguar was about to seize them they climbed the ladder up to the sky. There they were saved. Their mother was in pain. The mother had also climbed up to the sky. The children of the deer are the Pleiades and their mother is the Southern Cross.[1]

14. The Rain

The rain is a man who has a red fringed poncho in which he wraps himself when it rains. He rides about on a mule, his head entirely covered by his poncho the fringes of which are the rain. When he lifts his poncho to see the way his eyes flash lightning. The thunder is the roll of his drum. He never stops travelling and wherever he is there is rain. Upon his departure from a place the rain ceases. The rain especially dislikes the *quebracho* tree. He dares not strike this tree lest his testicles be cut by the falling tree. His wife alone is entrusted with the destruction of these trees.

[1] Stars like crosses which appear near the Pleiades in the morning in the middle of September

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15. The Wind (Pedro)

The wind is a man riding on a bad, fast horse. This explains the rapidity with which the wind travels.

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16. The Clouds (Pedro)

The clouds are formed by the smoke from the many fires lighted on the earth. The storm clouds are the smoke of the rain.

17. The Star-women (Pedro)

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Once there was a man so ugly that no woman would marry him. One night his mother heard him speaking with a woman. The following morning she asked, »With whom were you talking last night?» She did not know that the woman was the daughter of »The two brothers»[1]. The son remained silent. The mother asked again, »Who was she?» but he still refused to answer. Every night the star-woman would leave her home in the heavens, visit her lover, and then return. She combed his hair and gave him necklaces. Finally the man became good looking. All the women fell in love with him but he would have nothing to do with them as they had despised him when he was ugly. The star-woman took him to the sky with her as her husband. He met his wife's family. One day his wife and the women of her family went to pick wild beans. Before she left the star-woman said, »Do not touch the fire, it is bad, it will burn you.» The man did not obey her, he touched the fire which exploded. He fell down dead. His wife put his head and bones in a bag and dropped it near the house of his father and mother. The bag full of bones fell with a thud. The mother seeing what was in the bag knew her son was dead so she buried his bones.

[1] Name of a constellation.

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18. The Star-woman (second version) (Martin)

There was a man who was very ugly. Nobody liked him. One night he stood where the others were playing. Looking upward he saw in the sky a pretty red star. He said, »I would like to marry her.» As soon as he had made this wish the star stood near him. The woman said, »I came because you called me.» He told her that he loved her. They were married. But after a few days they quarreled. The woman went back to the sky and the man followed her.

[821] The Morning Star is an old man who has a big fire. His fire is cold. The star-woman was the daughter of the Morning Star. In the sky it is very cold. The father of the star-

[825] woman burned his son-in-law and ate him. His soul entered an owl called *tyustáx* which says »wek, wek, wek.»

C. THE TRICKSTER

19. Origin of the Corn

Tawkxwax sowed only one gourd in his field. The armadillo went to him and asked for a seed, but *Tawkxwax* refused to give it. The armadillo then cut off the end of his own tail, which was covered with granulous scales, and stuck it in the soil. Beautiful corn stalks soon sprouted from the ground. At that time the armadillo was the only one who had corn. *Tawkxwax* had gourds, melons, sorghum, sugarcane, peanuts, oranges, bananas, but no corn. He called on the armadillo and begged for some grains of corn, but the armadillo refused because *Tawkxwax* had been stingy when he had wanted some gourd seeds. Besides he never gave anybody his new plants. *Tawkxwax* went for a walk to a forest. He got tired and sat down beside a *yuchan*[1] tree. He started to carve this tree into the shape of a horse. He changed the wood into a living animal. In the same way he made a saddle, reins and bridle. Then he set out on

[824] [1] Bombaceae, silk cotton tree. The trunk has the form of a bottle; hence the popular name of the tree, *palo borracho* (drunk wood).

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of the dead the *āhat* hunts, gathers fruit and goes fishing for food. When he arrives at the abode of the dead, his people come to meet him and they take him to their house.

6) The dead inhabit a region of their own situated under the one we live in. When it is daylight here it is dark in their region.

The *āhat* sleep during the day and at night search for food. They feed on dead animals and fish. Their life is exactly the same as that of living persons. They have underground fields and lagoons. They cultivate the earth the same as we do, raise animals and go fishing.

The *āhat* fight each other like the living Bolivians and Paraguayans do. The spirits of the Matako are at war with those of the Toba.

7) A dead person is called an *āhat*. The *āhat* live in the bush and appear only at night. We do not know exactly what they do in the bush nor what they eat. Some of them may be good. The medicine-men may talk with them and learn what is going to happen. For instance, they predict disease and future death.

8) When a man sees an *āhat* he will die unless he is a medicine-man. When a person is dying an *āhat* comes and steals his fire.

9) When the north wind blows very hard, the *āhat* leave their abode and walk about the earth looking for uninhabited places. If they see a man they vanish under the earth, but sometimes they are seen from afar. Frequently the *āhat* transform themselves into the north wind, which brings storms.

10) If you dream that you are visiting the land of the *āhat* and one of them invites you to eat, you must refuse. If you accept you may die during the following year.

II. The Medicine-men and the Big Fire

A medicine-man may call on the Big Fire at the end of the world. On the journey he crosses first a rainy area and then he comes to a dark zone where it is impossible to see.

they fight in the sky. Upon awakening a vanquished medicine-man informs his family of his defeat.

Medicine-men like to visit the Sun for he is like a peddler, he knows everything. To protect the entrance to his abode the Sun has made a slippery trail. Those who step on it slip down and break their necks. The Sun gets the dead and eats them, generally broiled or stewed. The medicine-men know how to escape this danger. They transform themselves into wax and thus stick to the trail, crossing it without running the risk of being devoured by the Sun. The Sun closes the entrance to his abode with a sort of trap. This trap consists of two beams which knock against each other and crush those who try to get between them. Medicine-men who have had no experience get crushed. Those who are skillful transform themselves into humming birds (*cinax*) and thus pass quickly between the beams before they have time to close together. Behind the beams the sun has stretched traps. The medicine-men without experience get caught by their thumbs in these traps. The Sun gets them and kills them. Great medicine-men change into eels and creep between the meshes, thus escaping.

The Sun's abode is surrounded by a palisade of cacti with only one small window. The medicine-men can fly over it if they become humming birds, or they can change into rodents (*sičúm*, a rodent with a flat head) and dig a cave under it. The Sun is very surprised when medicine-men come to him in spite of beams, traps and fences. He goes to his traps and is quite amazed when he does not find anybody in them. When this occurs he has no food. If the soul of a medicine-man is eaten by the Sun, the medicine-man who has stayed on earth dies. When a medicine-man arrives at the Sun's house, after having overcome all the obstacles, he is welcomed by the Sun, who is no longer angry, and in order for the sorcerer to come nearer, the Sun turns colder. Otherwise it would be impossible to approach within 500 yards of him because he burns everything. The Sun asks the medi-

cine-man why he has come. He answers, »I came to have a talk, to call on you and become your friend.» They become friends.

V. Origin of the Rio Bermejo

The Rio Bermejo is very deep for it was dug by a big *tatu careta* (giant armadillo) who wanted to go to the source of the river.

VI. The New Moon

When there is a new moon, the Indians dance and beat on their drums (*pimpim*). The man who plays a drum wears a belt with hanging pendants of metal, hoofs and so on. They put water into the drum so that the hide will not get dry.

VII. Menstruation

It is the moon who sleeps first with the girls and that is why they menstruate. When a young girl is menstruating for the first time, she must begin working and doing all she will have to do later on. If she does not keep active during this period, then she will be lazy all her life. She must be in semi-seclusion for five days, only going out with her father's permission. She may not marry or have sexual intercourse until after her first menstruation. When a woman is menstruating, she must not go to the bush where she could easily become frightened and die.

VIII. Eclipses

An eclipse of the sun or moon foretells disease. When either the sun or moon becomes angry with men it covers itself. To have it uncover it is necessary to beat drums, shout, sing and to make all kinds of noise. When the sun is covered one may expect smallpox.

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IX. Storms

821 When a storm approaches with rain and thunder, little children's ears are to be covered each time the thunder crashes, 761 otherwise Rain would take them under his arm and carry them away to his house. When such a thing happens, the child's body, which has remained on earth, becomes lean and white and all the food he takes is of no use. He visibly pines away, and it is not likely that a medicine-man can cure him. He will finally die without the cause of his death being known. The rain cannot do anything to grown-ups or big children, for it has not the strength to carry them away, [841] but it can harm menstruating women who happen to be out during a storm. Then they get very feeble.

X. Shooting Stars

821 Shooting stars foretell the death of someone. Meteors are 787 stones thrown by the rain in order to fell the *quebracho*.

XI. Treatment of Snake Bites

752 When a serpent bites a man, it goes into the wound and 825 climbs up in his body. When a man's foot is bitten by a-snake the leg must be pressed starting from the thigh, squeezing down to the place where he has been bitten. In so doing, the snake which has already had time to enter the leg, is obliged to go down into the big toe where it rolls itself up, tired. The operation lasts from evening to dawn and when the sun appears the snake gets cramped and vanishes under the ground. Once the snake is out the medicine-man has to suck the wound, for the departing snake has left its skin inside the body of the victim. The patient is completely cured only when the last piece of skin left by the snake has been removed. Otherwise he remains sick, has a headache and gets thinner and thinner.

If the progress of the snake inside the body cannot be stopped, the animal may go up into the head and blind the victim. It also goes to the heart and after repeated bites

726 which was dry at the time. Then, moving along the left bank, they came upon the people of San Martín from the rear, cutting off their retreat. A large number of the latter, mostly women and children [727] were killed or wounded. The Yuto people carried off a child with them as a prisoner.

Divers Religious Beliefs

776 158 Among the spirits the most to be feared are the wilan who possess their victims and sink them into a state of furious madness. Thus, in the San Patricio mission a young girl all at once became pale, her eyes starting from their sockets. She fled, bolting into the wooded area, where she remained for four days. Those who followed her said that her tracks disappeared as suddenly as if the girl had flown through the air.

Another girl got up from a fainting spell during which she had been under the care of four witch doctors and said that a spirit had entered her.

Here is a case which took place in San Andrés a short time before my arrival. A Mataco had gone off to some distance from the village in search of a horse. On the way back he imagined that he saw against [15] a tree, a small luminous being, about the size of a cooking pot, which leaped from tree to tree and finally disappeared in the underbrush. Frightened, our Indian fled to the village where he fell in a faint and was shaken by violent convulsions. Doctor C. Smith had to give him a morphine injection to quiet him. The Indian got better and a few days later felt well enough to go out into the surrounding area. On the way back he had the same experience and suffered like aberrations. His parents, shaking with fright, went to get the doctor so that he might give him an injection. According to Dr. C. Smith, such hallucinations may be the result of kidney trouble, which causes the diseased person to have optical illusions, especially the apparition of luminous spots before the eyes. Certain strange and sinister sounds, also, which the Mataco Indians attribute to spirits [821] are really made by nocturnal birds. And a meteor, which fell into the Pilcomayo during my stay there was explained to me by the Matacos as the fall of an old man with gray hair.

776 The Indians will willingly speak about the lewo, mythical animals which live in the lakes and which look like serpents. Their [824] breath forms the rainbow (lewo-tutsax, which means lewo breath). [841] The lewo have a horror of women during the period of menstruation and if any woman should approach a pool or river in that state, the lewo will call up a tempest.

The Witch Doctors

756 The witch doctors get their power from the spirits, who teach them the magic dances. The soul of a witch doctor can be snatched away by a wilan or spirit and shut up in a tree. The spirit teaches him the language of the spirits and when his education is complete the spirit blows upon the novice and confers upon him the power of caring for the sick by the same means, that is, by blowing upon them. The meetings between spirits and witch doctors are very frequent, and take place at night.

In order to take the soul out of the body and send it on a supernatural mission, the witch doctors inhale up their noses a powder made [278] with roasted grains of sebil (Piptadenia sp.) to which they sometimes [824] add powdered tobacco. These inhalations cause them to become dazed [16] and then it is that the witch doctor's soul abandons his body and turns into an insect or a bird--usually the yulo--and goes off to alight on a tree which stands in the middle of a lake. This tree is perpetually shaking and it is extremely difficult to stay on it. A grave misfortune overtakes those who fall for they are immediately devoured by the palometas ["piranas" - a laterally flattened, ferocious, small fish - Translator] and crocodiles which swam in the lake. If the witch doctors are expert in their art they change themselves into lizards and so manage to stay on the tree. It is supposed that each witch doctor owns a branch of that tree which is closely allied with his destiny. While the leaves remain green the witch doctor enjoys good health and is in no danger but as soon as the branch starts to wither then his troubles begin.

[821] The witch doctors can predict good and bad weather for a long time in advance, for on their journeyings they see the green and dry leaves corresponding to the good and bad seasons of the year.